



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

State Department report documents China's wide-ranging human rights abuses in Tibet

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The State Department's 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices say the Chinese government committed significant human rights violations against the Tibetan people last year, including credible reports of unlawful or arbitrary killings, extrajudicial killings, torture, and cases of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment.

The reports became public April 12, 2022.

Highlighting "Sinicization" policy

The report on Tibet highlights the Chinese Communist Party's intent to "Sinicize" Tibetans—a term for a Chinese government policy to force Tibetans to assimilate into Chinese society by eroding their culture and language and replacing them with Chinese culture.

The report says monasteries throughout Tibetan areas were required to insert CCP members into their governance structures, where they exercised control over monastic admission, education, security and finances. Similarly, the report says authorities in the Tibet Autonomous Region—which spans nearly half of Tibet—carried out numerous propaganda campaigns to encourage pro-Communist Party speech, thought and conduct.

Additional controls on Tibetan Buddhism noted by the report include geographic residency limitations on who could attend each monastery, which undermined the traditional Tibetan Buddhist practice of seeking advanced religious instruction from a select number of senior teachers based at monasteries across the Tibetan Plateau.

Similarly, the state-run College of Buddhism in Tibet's capital of Lhasa spent approximately 40% of its study program teaching political and cultural education, according to the report.

In April 2021, the TAR Religious Affairs Bureau in Ngari Prefecture held a training course where they told clergy to "lead the religion in the direction of better compatibility with Socialism," and the CCP cadres promised to manage the monasteries and convents "in accordance with the law and continue to promote Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism with firm determination."

Undermining Dalai Lama

In line with China's constant attacks on the Dalai Lama, the Communist Party launched specialized propaganda campaigns to counter support for "Tibetan independence" and undermine popular support for the Dalai Lama.

The report says that in August 2021, Politburo Standing Committee Member Wang Yang and TAR Communist Party Secretary Wu Yingjie publicly urged everyone to follow Chinese President Xi Jinping and avoid the Dalai Lama "clique" and separatist forces.

Political prisoners

The State Department report also documents a significant number of Tibetan political prisoners. Citing outside observers, the report says that as of late May 2021, between 500 and 2,000 Tibetans were known or believed to be detained or imprisoned by Chinese authorities in violation of international human rights standards.

In its 2020 report, the State Department had mentioned only 273 cases.

Systematic racial discrimination

The 2021 report details the racial discrimination Tibetans face under Chinese rule and states that economic and social exclusion was a major source of discontent among a varied cross section of Tibetans.

The report says “major development projects and other government policies disproportionately benefited non-Tibetans and contributed to the considerable influx of Han Chinese into the TAR and other Tibetan areas.”

It says Chinese government propaganda against alleged Tibetan “pro-independence forces” contributed to Chinese social discrimination against ordinary Tibetans. Many Tibetan monks and nuns chose to wear nonreligious clothing to avoid harassment when traveling outside their monasteries. Some Tibetans reported that taxi drivers outside Tibetan areas refused to stop for them, hotels refused to provide lodging and Han Chinese landlords refused to rent to them.

Other violations

Other issues highlighted in this year’s full State Department reports include:

- A massively scaled, Chinese government surveillance system effectively monitoring and intruding on almost all aspects of life. “Authorities routinely monitored telephone calls, text messages, faxes, email, instant messaging, social media apps, and other digital communication,” the report says. The reports also highlight the CCP’s deployment of advanced technologies such as facial recognition and “gait recognition” video surveillance and artificial intelligence to help identify ethnic minorities “allowing police ... to quickly identify individuals in crowds.”
- Reports of biometric data collection by China, including “fingerprints and DNA profiles.” Importantly, the reports note that the CCP “was a major worldwide supplier of artificial-intelligence surveillance technology, such as facial recognition systems, surveillance cameras, and smart policing technology,” thus empowering despots and dictators around the world.
- Troubling reports of organ harvesting. The reports refer to a UN statement concerned with “allegations of organ harvesting targeting minorities, including Falun Gong practitioners, Uyghurs, Tibetans, Muslims and Christians, in detention.”



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